

# ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

## DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES



### NEWS RELEASE

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### **Prince William Sound Salmon Fishery News Release #46**

**BERING RIVER DISTRICT:** The Bering River District will open at 7:00 am on Monday, August 6 for a 36-hour period. For the week ending July 21, the Bering River District survey count was 9,900 versus a minimum anticipated goal of 14,400 sockeye salmon. During this survey, observational conditions for Bering River District systems were fair. Another survey of the Bering River District is anticipated to be flown this week.

**COPPER RIVER DISTRICT:** The Copper River District will open at 7:00 am on Monday, August 6 for a 36-hour period. The Miles Lake Sonar was pulled on Thursday July, 26 with a final cumulative total of 1,294,400 fish whereas the minimum anticipated count to this date is 649,454 fish. The preliminary harvest estimate from the 36-hour period that closed on Tuesday, July 31 is 2,500 sockeye and 900 coho salmon with 27 deliveries reported. The Gulkana Hatchery sockeye salmon harvest contribution from the fishing period that closed on July 20 was 23%. For the week ending July 21, the Copper River Delta survey count was 44,100 versus a minimum anticipated goal of 32,100 sockeye salmon. During this survey observational conditions on the Copper River Delta were fair. An aerial survey of the Copper River Delta is anticipated to be flown this week.

**ESHAMY DISTRICT:** The Eshamy District within the MBH AGZ will open to commercial SET GILLNET harvest for a 12-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Saturday, August 4. The Eshamy District within the MBH AGZ will open to commercial DRIFT GILLNET harvest for a 12-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Sunday, August 5.

The Eshamy District within the Main Bay Subdistrict and MBH THA and SHA, excluding the AGZ, will open to commercial gillnet harvest for a 48-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Monday, August 6. The AGZ will open to SET GILLNET permit holders only during the fishing period starting on Monday, August 6. Harvest from the period that closed Wednesday, August 1 was 100 chum, 7,100 sockeye, and 4,700 pink salmon with 70 deliveries reported. **To avoid damage to hatchery equipment during these fishing periods, PWSAC requests that fishermen exercise caution when operating around hatchery gear deployed in the MBH AGZ.**

**COGHILL DISTRICT:** The Coghill District, including waters of the Esther Subdistrict, WNH THA and SHA up to a line of buoys in front of the barrier net, and excluding the Bettles Bay Subdistrict, will open to commercial drift gillnet and purse seine harvest for daily 14-hour periods, from 6:00 am until 8:00 pm, on Saturday, August 4, and Sunday, August 5. The Bettles Bay Subdistrict is defined as waters west of a line from Point Pigot at 60° 48.21' N., 148° 20.90' W. to Point Pakenham at 61° 00.45' N., 148° 04.85' W.

The Coghill District, including waters of the Esther Subdistrict, WNH THA and SHA south of 60° 47.78' N., and excluding the Bettles Bay Subdistrict, will open to commercial drift gillnet and purse seine harvest for a 14-hour period starting at 6:00 am on Monday, August 6. **Waters of the WNH SHA north of 60° 47.78' N. are being closed for the August 6 fishing period at PWSAC's request.**

**PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND SEINE FISHERIES:** An aerial survey of the Southwestern, Montague and Southeastern districts was flown on Tuesday. An aerial survey of Northern, Unakwik, Coghill, Northwestern and Eshamy districts is scheduled for this afternoon.

VFDA has recommended standing down in Port Valdez to allow for the accumulation of pink salmon needed for broodstock. VFDA estimates approximately 350,000 pink salmon secured for broodstock near the Solomon Gulch Hatchery. VFDA's broodstock needs are approximately 346,000 pink salmon. VFDA does not anticipate recommending a Port Valdez pink salmon clean up fishery at this time. PWSAC began its pink salmon cost recovery program at AFK, CCH, and WNH on Thursday, July 26. It is anticipated that PWSAC's cost recovery program will be 100% complete as of this evening. ADF&G test fishing in the Southwestern District began on July 23, gauging pink salmon run entry and stock

composition. Stock contribution estimates from Wednesday, August 1 were 76% hatchery stock origin (SGH= 1%, CCH= 9%, WNH= 27%, and AFK hatchery = 40%) and 24% wild stock origin. ADF&G sampling of cost recovery harvest from PWSAC's AFK Hatchery on August 1 resulted in an estimated sex ratio of 18% female. ADF&G sampling of cost recovery harvest from PWSAC's Wally Noerenberg Hatchery on August 2 resulted in an estimated sex ratio of 25% female.

**EASTERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Eastern District, south of a line from Entrance Point to Potato Point, will open to commercial fishing for daily 14-hour periods, from 6:00 am until 8:00 pm, on Saturday, August 4, Sunday, August 5, and Monday, August 6. **Waters inside of the Salmon Harvest Task Force Markers in Sawmill Bay and Jack Bay will be closed to fishing during these periods.** The commercial harvest estimate from the 14-hour period on Wednesday, August 1 is 3,900 chum, 540 coho, 210 sockeye, and 207,900 pink salmon with 123 deliveries reported.

**MONTAGUE DISTRICT:** Waters of the Montague District will open to commercial fishing for daily 14-hour periods, from 6:00 am until 8:00 pm, on Saturday, August 4, Sunday, August 5 and Monday, August 6.

**NORTHERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Northern District, including the Perry Island Subdistrict, Cannery Creek Subdistrict, CCH THA and SHA will open to commercial fishing for daily 14-hour periods, from 6:00 am until 8:00 pm, on Saturday, August 4, Sunday, August 5 and Monday, August 6.

**All regulatory closed waters within Hidden Bay, west of 148° 06.40' W., will not be in effect for these fishing periods. Waters of the CCH Subdistrict west of a longitude line at 147° 34.40' W. will be closed to fishing during these periods to allow for wild stock run entry into Jonah Bay and Siwash Bay. Waters inside of the Salmon Harvest Task Force Markers in Long Bay, Granite Bay, Cedar Bay and Wells Bay will be closed to fishing during these periods. Waters of the CCH Hatchery Escapement Exclusion Zone (HEEZ) within the SHA will be closed during the August 6 fishing period at PWSAC's request.** The CCH HEEZ consists of the waters of the CCH SHA north and east of a line from 61° 00.97' N., 147° 32.62' W. southward to a point on the shore at 61° 00.44' N., 147° 31.50' W. This exclusion zone protects potential broodstock fish staging along the tidal flats in front of Cannery Creek.

**NORTHWESTERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Northwestern District will open to commercial fishing for daily 14-hour periods, from 6:00 am until 8:00 pm, on Saturday, August 4, Sunday, August 5 and Monday, August 6.

**SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Southeastern District will open to commercial fishing for daily 14-hour periods, from 6:00 am until 8:00 pm, on Saturday, August 4, Sunday, August 5, and Monday, August 6. The commercial harvest estimate from the 14-hour period on Wednesday, August 1 is 3,400 chum, 30 sockeye, and 70,800 pink salmon with 40 deliveries reported.

**SOUTHWESTERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Southwestern District east of Point Helen, waters within 1 nautical mile of Latouche Island east of Pt. Grace and east of the southern tip of the Latouche Island, waters of the Port San Juan Subdistrict and waters of the AFK hatchery THA and SHA will open to commercial fishing for a 14-hour period starting at 6:00 am on Saturday, August 4.

Waters of the Southwestern District east of Point Helen, waters within 1 nautical mile of Latouche Island east of Pt. Grace and east of the southern tip of the Latouche Island, and waters of the AFK hatchery THA and SHA will open to commercial fishing for daily 14-hour periods, from 6:00 am until 8:00 pm, on Sunday, August 5, and Monday, August 6. **Waters of the AFK Hatchery Escapement Exclusion Zone (HEEZ) within the SHA will be closed during the August 6 fishing period at PWSAC's request.** The AFK HEEZ consists of the waters of the SHA west and south of a line from 60° 03.40' N., 148° 03.33' W. to 60° 03.02' N., 148° 02.55' W. This exclusion zone protects potential broodstock fish staging in front of the AFK hatchery from being harvested in commercial fisheries.

As a reminder, **all salmon that are harvested but not sold by commercial permit holders in Alaska waters must be reported on a fish ticket at the time of landing** (5AAC 39.130(c)(10)). Fish tickets have a "not sold/personal use" field to report these salmon.

**The next scheduled salmon fisheries announcement is anticipated to be at 2:00 pm Monday, August 6.** Permit holders are advised that unscheduled announcements based on current escapement data may occur at any time inseason.

Announcement recordings are available for **gillnet fisheries at 907-424-7535 and seine fisheries at 907-424-7345. In addition, announcement recordings are available in Anchorage at 267-2843.**

Additionally, announcements, inseason harvest data, and escapement data are available at the following web addresses:  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.main> (Copper River homepage) or

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareapws.main> (Prince William Sound homepage).

Unless otherwise specified, all openings are clock openings based on Alaska Daylight Time, which is based on Coordinated Universal Time and may be obtained by calling 303-499-7111.

The department encourages commercial permit holders to renew their licenses early and to check their CFEC vessel registration stickers to make sure that they are current.

The department also encourages permit holders to report observed violations to Wildlife Safeguard at 800-478-3377. Reports are anonymous and cash rewards may be paid for successful prosecution of violations.

PWS commercial fishers are reminded that area fisheries often necessitate fishing in close proximity to marine mammals. Under the Marine Mammals Protection Act (MMPA), the PWS drift gillnet fishery is classified as a Category II fishery. Participants in Category I and II fisheries must be registered in the Marine Mammal Avoidance Program (MMAP) to be authorized for lawful incidental, but not intentional, marine mammal takes during fishing.

However, this authorization explicitly does **not** exempt holders of commercial fishing permits from the MMPA prohibition on takes of marine mammals listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act. As a participant in the PWS drift gillnet fishery you are automatically registered in the Marine Mammal Authorization Program (MMAP) by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). As a participant in a Category II fishery, you must:

- Maintain an MMAP Authorization Certificate, or a photocopy, on board the vessel while engaging in any of the fisheries identified on the reverse side of the certificate. For non-vessel or set net fisheries, the enclosed Certificate, or a photocopy, must be in the possession of the permit holder during fishing operations. This Certificate, in combination with a current, valid state or Federal fishing permit, will serve as your authorization to incidentally take non-endangered or non-threatened marine mammals in the course of commercial fishing operations.
- Report all injuries and mortalities of marine mammals within 48 hours of returning from the trip during which these takes occurred using the MMAP Mortality/Injury Reporting Form (visit [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/interactions/mmap\\_reporting\\_form.pdf](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/interactions/mmap_reporting_form.pdf) for a copy).
- If so requested, take an observer aboard your vessel.

Purse seine and set gillnet gear are classified as a category III fisheries under the MMPA. Category III fishery participants are automatically exempted from the incidental take prohibition in the MMPA. Therefore, you do not need to maintain the MMAP certificate aboard your vessel, but must report any incidental takes of marine mammals within 48 hours of the incident or your return to port. Such reports must be made on the Marine Mammals Authorization Program Mortality/Injury Reporting Form.

Because some marine mammals are also listed under the Endangered Species Act, incidental takes are also regulated under that act and are not authorized. **All** MMPA category fisheries are liable for incidentally taking ESA listed species.

Please reference [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/esa\\_factsheet.pdf](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/esa_factsheet.pdf) for a list of marine mammals currently listed under the ESA (you should periodically check with the National Marine Fisheries Service for any changes in listed species). Under the ESA, take means to “harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct.” 16U.S.C. 1532(19); and harass means an “intentional or negligent act or omission which creates the likelihood of injury to the wildlife by annoying it to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavioral patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding, or sheltering.” (50 C.F.R. 17.3).

To reduce the possibility of incidentally taking an ESA listed species and its associated liability ADF&G recommends that:

- Fishermen participating in area fisheries remain vigilant in monitoring gear when marine mammals may be present.
- Fishermen use avoidance measures (e.g., not fishing or relocating fishing activities when marine mammals are present or likely to be present) to minimize interactions with marine mammals.
- Avoid fishing in areas where marine mammals are likely to be present at night or when visibility or weather conditions make it difficult to spot marine mammals.

For further questions concerning marine mammal regulations call NMFS at 907-271-5006.